

## INTELLIGENCE

## CPYRGHT GRANDEE

By REBECCA WEST

The Craft of Intelligence BY ALLEN DULLES, Weidenfeld &amp; Nicolson, 30s.

IT is obvious that if a neighbouring state plans to blow us up we have the right to send in scouts to see when and how it means to do it. But this simple and sensible precaution is entangled in a complex of theft, abuse of good faith, violence, involvement with the underworld, and murder.

It is therefore surprising that *The Craft of Intelligence* by Allen Dulles, the former Director of America's Central Intelligence Agency, should be the blandest of volumes. This is largely due to the grand manner of Mr. Dulles, who is very grand indeed. To put it briefly, he is everything that Scott Fitzgerald would have liked to be.

One Secretary of State was his grandfather, another his uncle, another his elder brother; he himself was a light of Princeton Law School, a successful diplomat, a successful lawyer and he has a gay and splendid appearance.

## Harry

These advantages have insulated him, but must appear to English readers as the considerable success of being for long identified with an unpopular secret.

In times of crisis Americans rush into Intelligence Service with zest and display unusual talent for it. As Mr. Dulles tells us in his entertaining historical chapters, they improvised brilliant espionage and counter-espionage systems in the Revolution and the Civil War.

After that they lost interest. As he candidly admits, the American Army went into the first world war relying on the Allies for its intelligence services, for the reason that it had virtually none of its own. As the second world war came up over the horizon, this indifference per-

security organisation during the war, so clearly was there heard from beyond the grave the voice of the Duke of Wellington repeating, "I don't know what effect these men will have upon the enemy, but, by God, they terrify me."

On the whole the O.S.S. was a competent and courageous body, which contributed mightily to the defeat of Hitler; and it retained its character when it was reborn after the war as the C.I.A.

Mr. Dulles describes it happily as it followed its appointed path, on lines which, as he points out, do not differ greatly from those laid down in 400 B.C. by that as yet unsurpassed master of the subject, Sun Tzu. But what that must have meant in wear and tear can be estimated if the reader turns his mind to that ghastly drama, "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

The horror of that play is that it is true to life. There are such people in America as those four drunken academic slob, and what is more, though they are a minority, they exercise a certain influence. In fine, they form an Establishment, though they would usually be unable to pronounce that word after quite an early hour in the evening.

They represent themselves as rebels, but in fact they are rigidly conformist and hold certain standardised beliefs, chief of

## Gay and splendid appearance: Allen Dulles in London.

which is, that all the fortunate who get on with life and perform some function are, without exception, stupid and villainous.

It is a safe bet that all the slob in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" would have in their time repeated the story that the C.I.A. supported the O.A.S. Generals' plot against de Gaulle. This was a story that grew like poison-ivy in that world, and it was a heavy charge.

That was a favourite legend of the slob establishment, often told in the hours before they got down to the kitchen floor; and it too is denied in these pages. The denial makes convincing reference to the experiences in Mr. Dulles's past which have convinced him that spontaneous risings by unarmed people are not to be encouraged.

The slob establishment has a source of strength in its use for its own purposes of battered remnants of old American traditions. In its attacks on C.I.A., which is essentially a munition of war between the great powers, it reverts to a national tradition which is not so much pacifism as a dislike for anything but guerrilla warfare.

There could hardly be a less helpful revival for an America which has been called to be a great power. The charm of this volume is its unintentional revelations of those of Mr. Dulles's qualities which have enabled him to shrug off some of the less lovable archaisms of modern America.

## False Reports

For any fortunate nation to have dabbled in that woeful misfortune of two tortured peoples would have been a filthy crime. It also would have been laying heavy money on a dead horse. "The Craft of Intelligence" contains an explicit denial of this charge and traces it to its source.

This legend was not true. Neither, it appears, was the story that the C.I.A. stimulated the Bay of Pigs adventure by predicting that the landing would touch off a spontaneous rising of the Cuban population.

CPYRGHT

In 1941, after Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt set up the body later known as the Office of Strategic Services. Like all organisations in a breathless hurry, was it some personnel whose place was in bottles in the Hall.

The British are, however, in no position to sneer at this. After all, we had to disband one entire

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